

that is why her selection by President Biden is the right person for the right time for the right job. She is going to make history if we give her this confirming vote.

Now, I will tell you, when you publish some 580 to 600 opinions, you are going to find something in one of those opinions to raise. I listened carefully as Senator McCONNELL went to one of those opinions and drew his own conclusions. I would ask him to take care in accepting that as the fair way to measure a person. People often say that in the U.S. Senate—they ask us: Are you conservative or are you liberal or are you a fiscal conservative? Where do you stand on civil liberties? And people announce a position that they would like to believe they fit in. Then folks go back and look at your voting record and then ask: Well, how do you explain this, Senator? So in any given day, any given vote can raise a question as to a generalization about who you are and what you believe.

For instance, there was a time, as hard as it may be to believe, when people were suggesting amending the Constitution of the United States to make burning an American flag a violation—controversial. All of us revere the flag, but the notion of making this an amendment to the Constitution was a matter of great controversy and debate.

I remember it well in the Senate Judiciary Committee. I came down against it, saying that I revered the flag, but the principles and values behind it were equally or more important to me, and so I opposed flag burning and so did the Senator from Kentucky. Yes, the minority leader, Senator McCONNELL, opposed flag burning. The organization that agreed with our position was the ACLU. Now, can I generalize from that position which Senator McCONNELL took years ago that he is an ACLU-type of Senator? It would be wrong to draw that conclusion. There may have been other instances where he agreed with them, but it was rare.

What I am saying is, if you can take one vote and measure a Senator and realize that it falls short of being an accurate and honest measurement, the same thing is true for a judge, to take one opinion and say: Well, she ruled against President Trump on the issue of immigration, therefore, she is an activist liberal judge. She ruled as well for President Trump in other cases in his favor, and ruled against Democratic Presidents when they came up with their proposals before the court. So generalizations are not fair for her or for individual Members of the Senate based on one opinion, one vote, and that is what many are trying to do.

I will also tell you that this notion—and it pains me to even bring it to the floor, but I know it is going to come up in the next day or two—that she is soft on crime. As I mentioned, the law enforcement groups would not be endorsing her if they believed she was soft on crime.

And the notion that she is somehow, in the words of one Republican Senator—that her sentencing “endangers children,” that is painful because he said as much in front of her family. And I thought about that, how painful that must have been for her to hear those words. They are not true. And to take one or two situations, each of them unique in their factual circumstances, and to generalize in terms of her position on an issue of that gravity is fundamentally unfair. But we have done it, too, on the Democratic side, and I am going to be the first to admit, as I look back in history, there are things that should have been handled better when Republican nominees were before us.

And the majority of Republican Senators on the Senate Judiciary Committee, led by Ranking Member CHUCK GRASSLEY, I believe, were respectful and dealt with the judge in a fair manner. They asked tough questions, as they were expected to, but did not cross the line into personal attack.

There were three or four who broke that rule, as far as I was concerned, but the vast majority of Republican Senators were factual, were fair, and were basing their questions on sound legal questions before any Supreme Court nominee’s consideration. That I think will be talked about over the next couple days, as it should be.

#### TRIBUTE TO ERIK RAVEN

Mr. President, I want to take a moment to thank a former member of my staff who is an extraordinary man. He is smart, he gives wise counsel, and is truly devoted to this Nation. He worked for me for years.

I have worked with Erik Raven since 2014, when I became ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, and Erik was the chief clerk of the subcommittee. The title “clerk” is misleading. He was the brains and the operational force behind that subcommittee.

As my right hand, Erik led the massive and critically important effort to appropriate an average of \$700 billion a year for our national defense budget. Incidentally, that is about half of our Government’s annual discretionary spending—a big assignment—and Erik was the right person for that assignment.

As I mentioned before, my first introduction to the Senate was many years ago, as an intern to a former Illinois Senator, Paul Douglas. Douglas was a respected economist who joined the Marines at age 50—50—to defend democracy in World War II. He was badly wounded, became a war hero, and then was elected to the Senate.

Douglas famously said that you don’t have to be a wastrel to be a liberal. Douglas fought against waste in government because he understood that every misspent dollar weakens our national defense, every wasted dollar undermines our ability to build a better future. I think Paul Douglas would have liked Erik Raven.

Erik has been a stalwart ally in my efforts to advance our national defense capabilities while also protecting taxpayers’ dollars and investing in things like defense medical research and domestic sourcing of the components critical to our defense industrial base.

I traveled with Erik to more places than I can remember. There was one particularly eye-opening visit to a classified facility in a desert outside Las Vegas. You might say it was out of this world. I will also remember a trip we made to Poland and the Baltics in 2018, wherein we discussed the danger of the overreliance on Russian gas and other issues. Today, we see that playing out, tragically, in Ukraine.

It was also a relief to have Erik at my side. His deep institutional knowledge, his sense of humor, and his black bag full of secrets have served me and the committee and America well.

I know that Senator JON TESTER of Montana, the new chair of that same subcommittee, and other Senators with whom Erik worked share my high regard for him.

In his 20 years in the Senate, Erik has worked for Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, the late Senator Ted Kennedy, Robert Byrd, Senator Inouye, our former colleague Senator Mikulski, and our current chairman, Senator LEAHY. To countless Senate staffers along the way, Erik has been a mentor, a cheerleader, and always a friend.

In addition to his public service, he is a pilot and a black belt in karate. He enjoys golfing and running. He is a devoted husband to Ann, his wife, and father to Edward, his 7-year-old son.

Very soon, pending Senate approval, he will be our Nation’s next Under Secretary of the Navy.

The Senate’s loss is the Navy’s and America’s gain. I am confident that Erik will excel in his new challenge just as he has in the Senate. I wish him the very best of luck and thank him for his outstanding service.

#### FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES

Mr. President, it has been almost 6 years since the disastrous collapse of the infamous for-profit college chain ITT Tech.

At that time, ITT Tech was one of the largest chains of for-profit colleges in the country—130 campuses spread over 38 States and 40,000 students enrolled. It closed its campuses 2 weeks after the Federal Department of Education barred the parent company from enrolling any more students while using Federal student aid dollars.

I have come to this floor countless times to talk about the deceptive, predatory, desperate tactics of the for-profit college industry at large.

At the peak of its profitability, in 2000 to 2003, it was the hottest sector on Wall Street. Publicly traded shares in for-profit colleges rose 460 percent according to one analysis. In 2010, these for-profit colleges swept up more than \$32 billion in Federal student aid dollars. Hundreds of millions more flowed in through the GI bill. For ITT